



# THE DRIVE INTERVIEW™ GUIDE

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW GUIDE TO  
DETERMINE REAL SALES POTENTIAL





# Introduction

Salespeople can make or break a business; making the in-person interview a very important part of the hiring process. It is during this time that you conclude whether a candidate has the psychological characteristics and the intellectual aptitude to succeed in the world of sales.

Throughout this guide, we will show you the interview questions to ask when looking for salespeople with the core aptitude to sustain high-performance in sales.



# What is Drive?

Research shows that Drive is the most important factor for sales success. But, past the age of 21-22, Drive cannot be taught.

Drive is made up of three specific, non-teachable characteristics:

1. **Need for Achievement:** the intense desire set and pursue challenging goals and to pursue excellence for its own sake.
2. **Competitiveness:** the desire to be a top performer on the sales team and outperform competitors to win the sale.
3. **Optimism:** certainty of success and resilience to consistently overcome rejection.

While Drive cannot be taught, it can be faked in an interview, which is why it is critical for you to get past the facade and uncover your candidate's true potential.

- We prescribe a two-part process for identifying Drive in sales candidates. 1) Administer a sales personality test that specifically measures Drive, like [The DriveTest®](#), and 2) Conduct a thorough behavioral interview.
- This guide provides our interview recommendations.
- Let's dive in.

# The Drive Interview™

Planning for the interview ahead of time is key. We recommend you use a schedule similar to this:

**Step 1:** Open with small talk to warm up, relax and establish rapport.

**Step 2:** Discuss resume and career history. Ask candidate for reasons they accepted and left each previous job.

**Step 3:** Ask experience and aptitude questions. Questions are related to what is required to succeed in this position.

On the following pages, you will find our top three recommended questions for each essential trait that

- high-performance salespeople must possess to be successful long term.
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- Ask as many questions as needed. After you feel comfortable with the responses received, visit the scoring page to rate the candidate's skill level for each trait.

# Need for Achievement

*Look for: Accomplished very challenging objectives and has specific plans to top those. Has made sacrifices for success.*

**Q:** What's the toughest goal you've set for yourself?  
How do you plan to top it?

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**Q:** How do you know when you've truly succeeded?

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• **Q:** What kind of sacrifices have you had to make to be successful?

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# Competitiveness

*Look for: Experience with intense competitions with coworkers. Situations described as enjoyable, motivating and a common occurrence.*

**Q:** Tell me about the most competitive situation you have ever been in at work. How unusual was it for you?

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**Q:** When was the last time you were competitive?

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• **Q:** Where do you rank in the sales team? Can I have your permission to contact your manager to ask about your rank?

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# Optimism

*Look for: Stories about remaining resilient and sticking to their guns. Quickly able to put situations in perspective and coming back stronger after a tough time.*

**Q:** Tell me about a time when you remained persistent, even after others gave up.

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**Q:** Tell me about a time when you wish you have been more persistent.

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• **Q:** When was the last time you were rejected? What did you do to recover?

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# Organization

*Look for: Experience dealing with challenging situations that were resolved through time management and organization. Use of a consistent system to stay accountable.*

**Q:** Tell me about a time when your organization skills really paid off.

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**Q:** Talk about a situation when you wish you had been more organized.

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• **Q:** What kind of feedback have you received on your time management or organization?

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# Confidence

*Look for: Ability to remain assertive and flexible in the face of challenges. Ability to accept negative feedback constructively and without defensiveness and can adjust behavior.*

**Q:** Tell me about a time when you've gotten a result even though it upset someone.

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**Q:** What kinds of sales are easiest for you? Toughest?

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• **Q:** When is your confidence the highest? And lowest?

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# Persuasion

*Look for: An example or two of successfully changing someone's opinion and ability to articulate their method for doing so. When unsuccessful, what was learned?*

**Q:** Tell me about a time when you got someone to change their point of view.

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**Q:** What is helpful to you in getting someone to see things your way?

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**Q:** Tell me about the most difficult deal you ever handled.

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# Relationship

*Look for: A history of finding common ground and building relationships. Pay attention to customers who were difficult for the candidate. How does that compare to your customers and current sales team? Is there a good cultural fit?*

**Q:** Tell me about a customer relationship that was particularly challenging to develop.

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**Q:** What has been your biggest challenge in creating a customer relationship?

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**Q:** Tell me about your most difficult customer. What did they value? How did you bond with them?

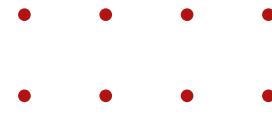
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# Scoring



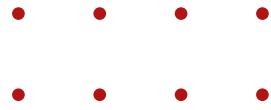
Score each trait using the following rating:

1 - weak | 2 - poor | 3 - average | 4 - good | 5 - excellent

- Need for Achievement: \_\_\_\_\_
- Competitiveness: \_\_\_\_\_
- Optimism: \_\_\_\_\_
- Organization: \_\_\_\_\_
- Confidence: \_\_\_\_\_
- Persuasion: \_\_\_\_\_
- Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the table on the next page to understand these ratings.

# Scoring



The following table provides a summary of the scores. If you ratings are ...

Score Summary	Score Summary
Mostly 4's & 5's	This candidate is clearly skilled and would need minimal development. High-potential.
Mostly 3's	This candidate may need some significant development. Proceed with caution.
Mostly 1's & 2's	This candidate lacks the skills needed to sell. High risk for performance problems. It is not recommended to move forward.

If you are looking for a “Hunter” salesperson, focused on new account acquisition, please keep in mind that the candidate’s potential will be limited by a low overall rating (Drive score).

If you need a candidate to start producing quickly with minimal training, the overall rating (Drive score) should be a 4 or 5.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

**Ready to take your sales hiring to the next level?**

Combining The DriveTest® sales assessment with The Drive Interview™ gives you an 80% accuracy of hiring high-performance salespeople.

We've helped 1,500+ companies worldwide identify 30,000+ high producers, and have a 95% satisfaction rating on Google and G2.

**Get started today with a complimentary DriveTest®:**

**<https://salesdrive.info/free-trial-request/>**

